

# four

# quarters

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**QUEEN OF THE WORLD**

# Green Cross in the Sky

• Charles Edward Eaton

“*BOAS Festas, Senhor Northrup!*” Peter turned to see the *Embaixatriz Barroso do Pimentel* and her daughter Sylvia sweep by, their dresses longer than those of anyone else, their hats a little more regal and *outré*. It was the grand manner in motion as though the years at the Court of St. James had given them a floating quality which would always be sure of its channel.

Peter smiled, bowed, and watched them stream slowly down the *salao nobre* of the Gloria, greeting and being greeted with just the proper amount of ceremony. Wasn’t it wonderful, he thought, how people respected and even admired them though they were rather defunct now, having come home after the Ambassador died in England to ride out the war years as best they could. He was sure the Hotel gave them special rates—it was that kind of place, subject to fits of generosity and almost human impulses which could hardly be said of the flashy establishments along the Copacabana. They would circle the *salao* several times, speaking to everyone, almost as from a sense of duty, and then stop to talk with different groups, perhaps to him, still fulfilling as best they could the diplomatic function.

“*Bon soir, Monsieur,*” Peter heard at his back. It was Maurice Perrin trying to overtake him, compensating for a slight limp with many

quick, small steps. “I wanted to wish you Happy Easter.”

“Thank you, Monsieur. I hope you are having a fine holiday.” The little man seemed all out of breath. He took off his spectacles to wipe away the moisture.

“Not bad, not good. Another—comment dit-on—crise de nerfs.”

“Well, there are lots of ways of saying it, but it always feels the same. I have an aunt who calls it a ‘sinking spell.’”

“*C'est bon. C'est parfait.* That's exactly how I felt today. As though the bottom was not there.” He smiled now, an almost childlike warmth welling up into the tired, bony, sensitive, little face. Peter liked him immensely, pathetic ruined little fellow that he was. They talked a lot about books together. A retired businessman, he had dedicated himself before the war to collecting first editions, now all lost to the Nazis except a few cases of the most valuable ones hidden in a cellar in Paris like the vintage of his life.

“You’re out for your walk, Monsieur. I won’t detain you,” he said when Peter motioned him to a chair. Backing away apologetically, he struggled with his bad legs as though he were gripped in a claw.

“I’ll see you tomorrow for lunch then? I want to show you some books I picked up in the Ouidor last week. I’d like to find out if they’re worth anything.”

All around him now, Peter heard the season's greetings, *Bonnes Fêtes, Boas Festas*, fringed with the sound of other languages he could not understand. The hotel was filled with a holiday crowd so that the faces of the regulars bobbed up only here and there. It gave him a good feeling to hear English come finally booming through the hubbub.

"Happy Easter, Mr. Northrup!" It was Leonard Lowe, the American opera star, and his wife, Paula, who had come down from New York for a series of concerts at the Teatro Municipal. Paula pushed ahead through the crowd, thin, blonde, and determined, the blade of the axe, while Leonard trailed heavily behind, fat and swarthy, "a big, soft bundle of artistic integrity," as one of the wits around the Embassy said. They had made quite a stink about the Ambassador's chilly treatment of them. But Peter didn't mind them so much. They weren't a bad sort when you remembered the rocky road any young artist had to travel.

He was glad, though, to slip out on to the terrace for the "promenade," an evening ritual with him, a modern substitute, perhaps, for the walk in the cloister, a good one, he thought. It was the green hour of the evening, produced, as it were, by the slow, covert burning of the mountains encircling Rio. The wooded hill behind the hotel which had inhaled the sunlight all day, stoking itself for its twilight diffusion, breathed back, and the air was a delicious emanation of trees and vine, streaked with the heavier smell of green-white lily, a chiaroscuro in the flow of scent, and there, like the

farthest tint of hidden emerald-fire was the clear, pale glow of the sky. It was the contemplative moment, the brutal harshness of the tropic sun having left a sense of distillation and purity in the air—that which had borne the day would endure until tomorrow. This time of afternoon, for which he prepared, almost as an aspirant might, with rites of purification, the bath, the careful toilet, the choosing in advance of certain things to think about, passages from a book suited to his mood, a sort of entourage of companion voices, seemed to him an unobtrusive form of praise, or, if that word were too lofty, at least of thankfulness.

Looking up and down the long, broad, tiled terrace which ran like a balcony across the entire second story of the hotel, he saw that many of the residents were entertaining a guest or two with a glass of wine or a cocktail before dinner. White-coated waiters glided back and forth to the tables by the balustrade, spreading a subtle atmosphere of ministrations from the interior where they worked. How he loved this hotel!—the Gloria—its name surely an inspiration. He had lived first on the Copacabana, but it had seemed pretentious in the end, demanding more than it gave, and, in the mood of drawing in the best of a landscape and a city, he had moved to the old European-style hotel, nestled like an overturned cornet of weathered gold in the curve of the hill which encircled and gently nudged it with a warm, green arm. The horn-shaped base was surrounded by a band of ascending wall, a majestic swathing like the

turning of a scroll, which gave it girth, suggestive of long good living and maternal peace. The *portaria*, the kitchens, all the machinery of living occupied the entire first floor, providing the structure with a sound and appropriate basis in the earth so that going up into the heart of the building was indeed an ascension as though the climate of the residents should have a pertinent suspension, an air-borne vista of the city and the sea.

As time passed, Peter came to possess it like a person loved—every corner, salon, all the corridors, which were not too modern, not letting in too much light, but buried in the flesh of the building like rich, old veins that still fed the massive frame, saturated with living, every room echoing the sound of laughter, sighs, and muffled words, stored as only young-old things can be with the experience of man. And like an essence within an essence was his own room. There had never been for him such a place of comfort and secure pleasure, the almost womb-like provision for restfulness, the privacy, the meticulous respect for the individual, and yet the knowledge that things would be done for one, the generous, encircling, and inclusive feeling of life gently throbbing on all sides. "Here are the things I enjoy," he could say over and over again, feeling that he stood in the miniature containment of desire, while he looked at the spacious room with its shabby-genteel furniture, his books, the delicious bed. Never in all his life had he slept so well, so dreamlessly, as though also there were somewhere below in the

capacious body of the building an old, locked dungeon in which the nightmare, the troubled vision were kept for the guest like unwanted but irremediable possessions.

"The rights of living! The rites of living! I have them here. We have them here," he said to himself, thinking with tenderness of the community of the Gloria. For him, in his version of prerogative, there were the early mornings in his sunny room which looked out on Guanabara Bay. He liked to sit nude in an armchair by the French windows, eating luscious slices of papaya, swallowing, as it were, pieces of compressed sunlight while the surface of his skin drank in the atmosphere, his body like a mold for the alchemy of the sun. His breakfast over, the ten minutes of relaxation he allowed himself in the glowing repose of the room gave him the feeling of being embedded in a topaz, an arrested moment of gold with the exquisite sense of Eternal Present such as he imagined the ancient Greeks enjoyed. Sometimes he wondered if he were not one of the few who still had the gift of even momentary self-absorption. The frightening thing about his time was its loss of the delectable sense of the individual. People simply didn't like themselves anymore, and though they went looking for someone to tell them they were to be envied, they usually were disappointed, having stored up so little to resist the unhappiness of others, the attrition of the days that came on implacably.

"The coming day"—though he liked and believed in his work at the Embassy, those words were tinged

with a sigh, recalling the price he paid for the right of the Gloria. As a Special Assistant to the Ambassador—his position was not regular career, but a wartime appointment of the Secretary of State—he worked long and hard, never getting used to the languid arrivals and early departures of the officers. He had expected to find the Embassy geared for war, since, at the time of his arrival, Brazil had been Nazi in all but open alliance, and there was much work to be done, which, he thought, involved something more than the business as usual attitude. He made a good many enemies by speaking his mind too freely, and it was not long before Harrison James, a young Vice-Consul with whom he shared an apartment for a short time, began to tell him the score.

"Look, Pete. You'd better slow down. That speech you made at Clark's house last night didn't go over so good. He's been around a long time, you know. I think all that talk about cultural affinities and souls of people sounded pretty fancy to him. I wouldn't let him get any wrong ideas about me if I were you. He's a tough old bastard and could do you in with the Ambassador. As far as he's concerned, and that goes for me too, we're down here to buy up the Brazilians. It's as simple as that."

"I can't see it that way, Harry. Honest I can't. If we follow that policy, we're going to be the most hated nation on earth after we pull out and the money stops. I know we've got to be practical, but I don't see why we can't be more than that. Look at what the French and the

English have done here. In lots of ways they have more prestige than we do without having anywhere near our sort of money to throw around. I'm not arguing against what Clark calls a realistic approach. God knows we always have plenty of that around. But there are lots of other ways of approaching Latin Americans, ways we've generally overlooked. It's the difference between a mature and an immature diplomacy."

It was the life at the Gloria, he often told himself, that enabled him to come back to such statements in spite of the antagonism of some of the older men who were like old and hardened voices of Harrison James. It was the Hotel that helped him to hold on to his standards in spite of their daily immersion in a world of action surrounding them like a dissolvent or a vat in which a thing went in white and came out purple. Consequently, he had been able to sustain his notions about the Foreign Service, not as undercover hatchet-men, the "devils in top hats," but as the advance guard of two or any number of nations that were slowly, painfully moving toward each other. The Foreign Service—even the name implied the possibility of a select corps representing those who believed in a concept of the national-international community as the only logical development of life on a basically benign and opulent star. In short, theirs should be an adhesive function, as though the loose, violent world could be retaped, tightened and drawn together only by endless patience and faith.

The lovely suspension of the evening with its soft and equable light provided a perfect atmosphere for reverie, a word, Peter remembered, one used in the modern world apologetically. Everything had to be dynamic, high-tension, and meditation was often synonymous with vacuity, the numb, the lifeless. It gave him an almost archaic feeling of life that he indulged himself so, but he realized at the same time that it was this alone which permitted him some sense of balance between clarity and motion, a sort of poise of living almost lost from the world.

He thought of Verlaine, whom he had chosen as the companion of his walk. He had been reading his poem "Green" just before he came down from his room, and it seemed that the opening lines, "*Voici des fruits, des fleurs, des feuilles et des branches, Et puis voici mon coeur . . .*" contained the very tone of the evening, and he was glad to have that voice beside him as evidence that the past, the present, all time blent together, were full of such comrades, the lineage most worthy of pride, the only family to be claimed, multilingual, manifold of soul, bound by the quality of their attachments.

He remembered, though, with a twinge of regret that he probably should have gone to church since it was Easter. At home he always went on that day at least. There on the hill directly above the hotel was the exquisite little baroque Igreja da Gloria, white and gold, echoing the tones of the large, expansive structure below so that one could almost have imagined there

was a corridor between. When he first arrived, he had climbed the Ladeira de Gloria one afternoon in a sightseeing mood, and, looking down, had caught more beautifully than ever before the earth-flow of the city below, as though all of Rio were streaming through a fabulous passage of blue and gold. There had been something ecstatic about it and yet appalling too and he had been glad to go into the empty, silent, little church with its warm, dark-golden stone and blue tiled mosaics of the saints. He had meant to go back often, but somehow had put it off.

As he returned on his second round to the far end of the terrace, he recognized among the newly arrived Louis and Adrienne Robitaille, sitting at a corner where the breeze brought in its odor of earth, cool and then warm like intermittent breath. They were members of the French Embassy and among Peter's best friends, part of his "immediate family" in the Gloria.

"Ah, Pierre, bon soir. Comment ca va? . . . the evening, *c'est superbe, n'est-ce pas?*" Louis rose with alacrity, his body straightening quickly like a well-oiled hinge. "You will come and sit with us a while, no?" He was a handsome young man with a lively smile, the type of the *beau garçon*, youthful and sophisticated at the same time.

"Why, hello, Louis!" Peter said, glad of a chance to sit and talk a while. "Where have you been hiding? I didn't see you at the opening of the French Exposition the other day."

"No, we could not go. *Quel dom-*

*mage!* You see, we're moving in a few days. Such a fury . . . furor . . . do you call it? . . . this packing up and putting away oneself. Really indecent, obscene. One doesn't know what to keep and what to throw away." They reached the table where Adrienne rose to shake hands warmly.

"Comment ca va, Pierre? Bonnes Fêtes—how do you say it? Happy Easter!" A striking ash-blonde, she had eyes like green water pebbled with brown.

"Thanks a lot and the same to you. But what's this I hear about your leaving?"

"Yes, *c'est vrai*. It's too bad, but it's true. We did not want to but the *Ambassadeur*, he says we should have more room. There's our share of the entertaining to do, *vous savez?* *Les obligations sont terribles, n'est-ce pas?* We have been so happy here . . . happy as the larks!" She talked rapidly, fluttering her hands like wings.

"Well, I'm sure going to miss you. I had begun to think of you as permanent as . . ." Peter looked around him for some ancient column of strength nearby. "Oh, well as 'temporarily permanent' as I," he finished with a laugh.

"But you do not need to miss us," Louis said quickly. "We move to an Annex. Our house will be '*une petite Gloire*,' you will see. There should be a lot of them, *n'est-ce pas?* *Une bonne idée, non?* A world full of Glorias?"

"Nothing could be better," Peter answered. "I'll surely take along a replica when I go back to the States. There's something about

this old castle that gets you." He looked up fondly at the mottled tan and yellow walls, taking off his horn-rimmed glasses for a moment—he had often wondered whether they gave him a look of hostility and arrogance, wishing that he could get along without them. When he was a boy, they had seemed to put him in a special world of vision by himself, clarifying the furry images that bumped and nudged him, but also destroying the closeness, the immediacy, the intimate quality of things, as though the eye, like the rest of the body, were meant to have direct contact with the world around it.

"Oh, Pierre," Adrienne said, breaking the silence that settled among them when their eyes followed Peter's which appeared to be memorizing forever each corner and angle of the building, and her lovely soothing voice was like an arm thrown across his shoulder. "We are giving a house-heating party—is that right?—next Friday. And we want you to come, you, especially."

"House warming, *mon chou!*" her husband said gaily. "The heat is one thing, and the warmth, it is another. We do not want our guests to burn down the house. Ah *ma chérie*," he continued with mock despair. "Your English, it is like something you learned coming over in the boat."

"Never mind, Louis. I could understand her no matter what language she spoke." Peter turned to her and smiled. "I'd love to be there, Adrienne. And I'll come via a tunnel from the Gloria."

Hearing a "Hi, Pete, Hi, Addy, Hi, Looey," they turned to see Jack

and Sarah Martin coming down the terrace, opening an avenue among the people with a direct and unmanered concentration on their friends. They sailed along blithely, Sarah in a comfortable white cotton dress, a little blowsy, but somehow just right for her freshly scrubbed, blonde looks, and Jack, a strapping young man in his thirties wearing a loosely fitting blue seersucker, the two of them reminding Peter with affection of the old slang phrase, "they just blew in."

While he flagged the waiter for two Old Fashioneds, Jack and Sarah joined them, spreading the group along and out from the table in irregular cruciform. The color of the sky was slightly denser now, tinted faintly with black, and Peter noticed that the faces of his friends were more luminous, the way white flowers shine purer as night falls.

"Well, how's the Treaty-Maker?" Jack turned to him with an affectionate grin. "Been doing us a lot of good down there in the Chancellory today? Making with the maps and pins, eh what? Yes, sir, I see you've got that look of the pinner-downer, and I say to myself, 'Pete's been at it again, nailing down the old fluttery world like a butterfly.' There's Looey, too, the both of you like old professors who are going to meet somewhere out there in the field and exchange specimens. You guys give me the creeps sometimes. Honestly, I believe you'd put most of us in a show case if you could. Me?" He punched himself in the chest. "I'm just a peasant at heart. When I see a worm, I step on it. I reckon I haven't got sense enough

to wait around and see if it sprouts wings."

"Just listen to the man run on," Sarah said, wrinkling her nose at him. "That's a whole lot of peasant, let me tell you. Wait till he gets the grease off his hands at night. Then he's General Patton and the Secretary of State rolled into one modest, little package. Let me get settled with a good radio program after a hard day down at the U.S.O., and he says, 'You know what, Sarah . . . ' and we're off for the rest of the evening . . . the whole European campaign revamped, a bevy of generals court martialed, Hull booted out of the Cabinet—really, it's worse than the War. If I didn't love the guy, I'd feed him glass on the side."

"You see, ladies and gentlemen," Jack said, sprawling back in his chair with an air of pained resignation, "the plight of the American Male. Undermined in his own home. Was there ever a more pitiful sight?" He turned to Peter, his hand waving back a chimaera. "Don't ever do it, Pete, don't ever marry one of these beautiful creatures called girls. When they run out of words, there's always the radio, truly a lethal accomplice, clearly designed for preventing a man from giving his mate a word of wisdom from time to time."

"You see what I mean, Adrienne?" Sarah asked. "Isn't he wonderful? Put in a nickel and everytime you hit the jackpot. And me with my apron already overflowing."

Peter liked to hear their bantering, "I won't take anything off the lug" attitude which was the Amer-

ican understatement of affection. Jack, an expert in aeronautic techniques, had been loaned by the U. S. Government to Panair do Brasil for the War emergency, and he and Sarah had come to the Hotel for two weeks while they hunted apartments, but had stayed on. Peter was worried about their breeziness at first, wanting them to be liked, and he had been delighted to see how well they got along. Wincing sometimes at their lack of finesse, he had an inward feeling of tears for it the next moment, and wondered if it were he who was beginning to fail in some essential purity of heart. But, no, he did not wish them different but that they could be themselves, yet something more. He remembered the time he had seen Sarah at the luncheon hour in her blouse and gay peasant skirt, holding little Johnny by the hand, standing around the huge, white, *hors-d'oeuvres* board, not unlike a magnificent festal cake, which reached, many-tiered and parabolic, nearly to the ceiling in the ante-room of the dining salon. The waiter held their plates while Sarah pointed to this and that, sometimes sampling a dish before choosing it (Ummm isn't that good! Some of that, please.) as if she had been in her own kitchen at home, so that, to anyone watching, the lavish display of food was made as familiar as the abundance of an old fashioned table. The *maitre d'hôtel*, a suavely handsome old Italian, watched the proceedings with an expression of amusement and pleasure, framing the scene for himself, as though the mother and child had brought something sweet,

healthy, and unexpected into a domain and atmosphere which he had commanded, and fastidiously preserved, for so many years.

Peter called the waiter to refresh their drinks, and, as he took them from the tray himself, he experienced an effulgence which he had not felt since that afternoon at the top of the Ladeira da Gloria, as though his whole being drank at a wonderful source, and there was a sudden, utter recollection of the blondeness of his childhood, a radiance not only of his light hair and physical erubescence but a bright cloud of joy surrounding him entirely—a feeling itself contained in the memory of the mountain resort which had been the family retreat until he was seven or eight—the central scene in the little, shady spring-house where he and his mother went with their cups to drink, and it had been his particular pleasure to go to the spring and get a cup of water for everyone, tirelessly round and round the circle of smiling faces, with not a refusal, but a deft hand upon his head or a quick lip-brush until he felt himself imprinted and quivering with the touch of life. . . . Adrienne, Louis, Jack, Sarah—no, nothing was ever lost!—there could have been so many others at the table, and it took them to make him see there were. He picked up his glass and tipped it in salute, acknowledging them and all the others.

"Look, *mes amis!*" Adrienne said, and lifted her hand spontaneously, pointing toward the deepening sky above Sugar Loaf. "The *Cruzeiro do Sul*, the Southern Cross! . . . Remember? . . . It's Easter!"

It was what Peter had been waiting for. All evening in the lucid and lovely green he had been sensing the emergence of the constellation, seen time and again on his promenades, but which never failed to arouse, as avid as hunger, thrilling premonitions of its advent, an astral epiphany, anticipated but ineffably fresh, the stars for the moment shining under a film of green until the eyes, suffused all evening in the element of their searching, yielded to a final vision of stellar white. There shone Alpha Crucis, the brightest star in the group, and there, uniquely burning, Beta Crucis and the companion stars, one of which Peter remembered an astronomer as saying, "was the fullest and deepest maroon red, the most intense blood-red of any star I have seen. It is like a drop of blood when contrasted with the whiteness of the others." Focussed on singly, they were shining like worlds alone, and it took more than a casual glance at the sky to bring them together in their marvelous shape, as though any observer must recapitulate their discovery and recognition.

It was time to go in. The sound of the string ensemble pulled gently and serenely at the faraway wandering of their mood. Peter was glad to see his friends settle back into themselves, comfortably but

somewhat more powerfully contained after the pause of looking up together at the stars. Was it the Greeks—he couldn't remember—who said that a man was not lost if he kept the sense of wonder?

The two couples walked ahead, arm in arm together, with Peter slightly behind them. He thought of Verlaine again as he took a last look at the sky, recalling the lines that were like an echo of the evening:

*"Un vaste et tendre  
Apaisement  
Sembler descendre  
Du firmament  
Que l'astre irise . . .  
C'est l'heure exquise."*

"Which the star makes iridescent," Peter said to himself in his own tongue as he approached the dining salon, festooned on all sides with flowers looking as though they might have sprung up from the earth beneath. Just at the door, in a resplendent nest of brightly colored eggs, sat a large rabbit of ice that seemed to gather all the colors of the room into his translucent flesh. He was handsomely carved, a real *tour de force* from the chef of the Gloria, and with his red, embedded-cherry eyes gleaming and smiling, he gave a princely welcome to them as they went in.

# **Europe from the Reformation to the Revolution**

● Christopher Dawson

## I. BOURGEOIS AND BAROQUE\*

THE period of modern history which extends from the Reformation to the French Revolution is a very difficult one to study and, I believe, there is a real danger that it may become increasingly neglected, especially by Catholic scholars. In the past and, indeed, up until quite recently this period was regarded as "Modern History" and it was the main object of study not only by the popular literary historians, like Macaulay and Carlyle and Froude, but no less by the great men of learning, like Ranke and Acton, whose vast knowledge and powers of research have never been surpassed. But today Modern History has acquired a new meaning. More and more historians are devoting themselves to the study of the immediate past. New fields of study are being brought into the domain of history, while the wars and revolutions through which the world has passed in the present generation have changed our perspective and have made the Europe of the 17th century as remote (and to Catholics perhaps, more remote), than that of the 15th century. These centuries no longer belong to Modern History. Although they are not medieval in the technical sense, they are as it were a new middle age which separates modern Europe from medieval Christendom.

Nevertheless, though this period no longer belongs to "modern history," it still retains its importance since it is the age out of which modern Europe and the modern world have come. It is the age that saw the creation of the national state, the creation of modern science and the flowering of the modern vernacular literatures. Above all it is the age which saw the expansion of Western culture from its original West European centre to America and to the world. And it has a peculiar and tragic interest for Christians, because it was the age which saw the division of Christendom, when the Catholic and Protestant worlds assumed their existing forms and when Western culture began to undergo that process of secularization which has only been completed in our own days. If we do not understand this age, we cannot be said to understand European culture at all or American culture either.

Yet it is a very difficult age for us to understand; in some ways even more difficult than the Middle Ages proper. In the first place, we have

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\* The first of four installments, in which FOUR QUARTERS presents the author's recent Oriel Lectures delivered at Oxford University.

always been taught to approach it from a strictly national standpoint. And though it is easy enough to study the England of the Tudors or the France of Louis XIV from this national angle, this makes it all the more difficult to study Europe as a whole. For then, as always, the typical European movements crossed the national frontiers and set up complex international relations which changed the national part as well as the European whole. The Renaissance, the Reformation, the Catholic Revival, the Enlightenment were all international movements, though each of them owed much to the leadership of some particular people. For while it is natural and right that we should study political history in terms of states or political units, it is also right that we should study civilization in terms of cultures.

In spite of the doubts of the positivist, a culture is just as much a sociological reality as a state. Indeed it is more real inasmuch as it has a larger social content. For it is at once a common way of life based on a common social tradition and also a spiritual community based on common beliefs and ideas. But while this conception of culture has become fundamental in the work of the modern anthropologist and pre-historian, it is still comparatively unfamiliar to the historian of modern Europe. And it is mainly on this account that the period of which I am speaking is so difficult to study, since, in spite of the immense wealth and variety of historical literature, there is a remarkable lack of standard works on European culture as a whole, especially during the 17th century when the Baroque culture of Catholic Europe transcended national and political frontiers as the culture of medieval Christendom had done.

This is particularly unfortunate because the age of which I am speaking began with two great international movements—the Renaissance and the Reformation—which had a profound effect on European culture and which cannot be explained in political or national terms. Neither can they be explained in terms of one another. In spite of the intimate and complex relations between them, both alike are aspects of the great cultural revolution which was due to the dissolution of the medieval unity of Western Christendom and to the reorganization of the different elements of Western culture according to new patterns. Throughout the medieval centuries from Charlemagne to the Council of Constance the unity of Western Christendom had been the basis of Western European culture. No doubt it is easy to exaggerate and to idealize this unity, but when everything has been said the fact remains that the Catholic Church was the mould in which all the diverse social elements of the Western society were brought together and fused into cultural unity. It gave the peoples of the West not only a common faith, but a common intellectual education, a common moral law, and a common system of organization. Technically the organization was an ecclesiastical one, but it entered into every aspect of social life and was in many ways stronger and more effective than the nascent political organization of the European state. For it was the Pope and not

the Emperor who was the true head of Christendom, and he exercised a real superpolitical authority over the Kings and Princes of Western Europe.

Nevertheless, this Papal supremacy did not involve an Italian hegemony. The centre of the common culture lay north of the Alps in the area between the Rhine, the Rhone, and the Loire, and it was in this centre that the creative movements of medieval culture had their origin. In the 8th and 9th centuries it was the centre of the Carolingian empire and the Carolingian culture. In the 10th and 11th centuries it was the source of the movement of monastic and ecclesiastical reform which had its centre in Lorraine and Burgundy, and it was the alliance of these two movements with the Papacy which determined the form of medieval Christendom and the character of its culture. So, too, in the following period this area was the source of the Crusading movement and of the Cistercian reform, and the centre of university movement, of the scholastic philosophy and of Gothic architecture and art.

But the later Middle Ages saw the decline of all these movements except the last. Monasticism decayed, the Crusade was abandoned, the scholastic synthesis disintegrated under the influence of Nominalism, and the alliance between the Papacy and the movement of ecclesiastical reform was dissolved. And at the same time the focal area of medieval culture was divided and ruined by the destructive conflict of the Hundred Years War and the internecine feud between France and Burgundy. The Council of Constance represented a final effort of medieval Christendom to recover its lost unity. Thenceforth, the axis of Western culture shifted to the south.

In the Italian cities during the later Middle Ages, a new kind of society was being formed which differed radically from the feudal society of Northern Europe and tended to reproduce the old patterns of Mediterranean city culture. As the Northern culture centre declined, this revived Mediterranean culture grew in strength and self-confidence and became increasingly conscious of the great traditions of the past. This consciousness was increased by the fact that the Italian cities were now the dominant power in the Eastern Mediterranean and were thus brought into contact with a civilization older and more refined than that of continental Europe. For although the Byzantine Empire was moribund, Byzantine culture was still a living force and the beginning of the 15th century was even marked by a certain cultural revival inspired by Hellenic as distinct from Byzantine traditions. The centres of this revival were in European Greece, at Mistra in the Peloponnese, and at Athens, which was at that time the capital of a Florentine dynasty and the meeting place of Byzantine and Italian influences. Thus at the time of the Council of Florence (1439) the two movements of Italian and Greek culture were able to meet on equal terms, and the advent of Byzantine scholars, like Manuel Chrysoloras, Gemistos Plethon, Demetrius Chalcondyles, Theodore Gaza, and Cardinal Bessarion

stimulated the revival of Greek culture in Italy. Although 19th century historians often interpret this movement as neo-pagan and hostile to the traditions of Christian culture, it was in fact regarded with favour by the Church, and its leaders throughout the Renaissance period held key positions in the Papal court and chancery. Indeed the alliance of the Papacy and the humanists was one of the dominant features of 15th century culture and replaced the alliance between the Papacy and the monastic reformers which was characteristic of the 11th and 12th centuries.

Meanwhile in Northern Europe the preoccupation with the reform of the Church still persisted. But it was no longer associated with monasticism or with the Papacy. It tended rather to express itself in heretical or schismatic movements and to ally itself with the rising forces of nationalism and the national state as we see in the Hussite movement and even in that of Wycliffe which preceded it. Even the more orthodox reforming movement which expressed itself at the Council of Constance and Basel became increasingly hostile to the Papacy, so that at the very moment when Pope Eugenius IV and the Byzantine Emperor and patriarch had succeeded in ending the ancient schism between East and West, the West as represented by the Council of Basel was deposing the Pope and asserting the supremacy of the General Council against the Papacy.

It is true that the schism of Basel soon came to an inglorious end, but the neutrality manifested by Germany and so many of the northern princes showed how doubtful the allegiance of the West to the unity of Christendom had become. During the next 70 years the importance of the question of the reform of the Church was universally recognized, but no effective action was taken. The Papacy became increasingly absorbed in Italian politics while the northern rulers used the demand for reform as an excuse for extending their control over the Church in their dominions. Nor should we assume that the interest in reform was confined to the conciliar party or to Northern Europe. The Italians and even the Humanists themselves were fully conscious of the need for reform. The greatest of the Humanists, Pope Pius II, was also one of the last champions of the unity of medieval Christendom and the medieval idea of the Crusade, though at the same time he was well aware of the decline of these ideals and of the way in which national rivalries and political ambitions were destroying the unity of Christian society.

The European situation was ripe for an explosion. Martin Luther was simply the revolutionary leader whose passionate genius fired the train. He was the living embodiment of all the elements in Northern Europe which were most alien from Rome and from the new Mediterranean culture. He appealed from Hellenism to Hebraism, from Italian humanism to Northern religious emotion, from the authority of the Roman Papacy to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation. There was however one respect in which he agreed with the humanists: he shared their dis-taste for asceticism. The circumstances of his conversion caused him

to react with extraordinary violence against the monastic life and the ascetic ideal on which it was founded, above all the ideal of virginity. And this was one of the most revolutionary aspects of his work, for the monks had been the makers of Western Christendom. They had dominated medieval culture from its beginnings down to the 13th century when their influence had been replaced by that of the friars who represented the same ascetic ideal in a more popular and personal form.

Moreover monasticism was not peculiar to Western Christendom. It was common to the whole Christian world from Russia to Abyssinia, and to the whole Christian past since the 4th century, so that its destruction changed not only the social and institutional pattern of medieval culture but also the moral and spiritual ideals of the Christian life. Religion was secularized in the sense that it was reorientated from the cloister to the world and found its centre in the family and in the active fulfillment of man's earthly calling. No doubt all this was secondary in Luther's eyes to the fundamental evangelical doctrine of salvation by faith alone. But the destructive element of the Protestant revolution was more far reaching than the positive, and was to some extent independent of it, as we see in the early history of the English reformation.

For Henry VIII had no sympathy or understanding for Luther's religious ideas. The tradition to which he appealed was that of Philip le Bel and Louis of Bavaria, as we see from his publication of works like Massilius' *Defensor Pacis* and the *dialogus inter Miletum et Clericum* of which English translations were produced in 1533 and 1535. And so long as his schism followed these conservative lines it met with little resistance from clergy or people. But when from political and economic motives he followed the Protestant example and attacked the monasteries, the revolutionary character of his work became clear and it aroused a wave of popular Catholic feeling which under more vigorous leadership might have changed the course of history.

The Reformation was a revolutionary movement not merely on account of the excesses of fanatical minorities, like the Zwickau prophets or the Anabaptists of Munster, but because it changed both the spiritual and social order of the medieval world. Nothing is more remarkable than the rapidity with which the movement spread across the whole of northern Europe in the course of a few years from Switzerland to the Rhine to Scandinavia and the remote territories of Livonia and Courland. In these years the resistance of the Catholics was insignificant. The religious orders, notably the Augustinian Friars, were themselves the leaders of the revolt and before the Catholic forces had had time to rally, Germany had become three quarters Protestant and Scandinavia and the Baltic Lands almost completely so. Only Iceland stood out for a little. When the first Icelandic monastery was destroyed by the Danes in 1539, the perpetrators were outlawed by the Althing and the governor was deposed. It was not until

1550 that the last Catholic bishop Jan Arason, the poet, was executed at Skalholt with his two sons.

But while it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of Luther as the source of the revolutionary movement which destroyed the unity of Christendom and split Europe asunder, his achievements as a constructor and organizer were relatively small and it is very doubtful whether Lutheranism would have withstood the Catholic reaction that followed if it had been left to its own resources. The wider development of Protestantism as a European movement which met the Catholic Counter Reformation on its own ground was mainly due to a genius of a very different type.

John Calvin was a French bourgeois, the son of a lawyer at Noyon, who brought to the service of the Protestant cause the logic and discipline and legal acuteness of the Latin mind. Unlike Luther he was essentially an intellectual, a scholar and a man of letters. But he was an intellectual who had the gift of ruling men and from his study he was able at once to govern a state and to direct a world-wide movement of religious propaganda and ecclesiastical organization. In place of the somewhat shapeless and incoherent mass of doctrines and tendencies represented by Luther and the German reformers, he fashioned a coherent logical body of doctrine and an iron system of discipline and in place of the state-controlled Lutheran territorial Churches, he created an autonomous church which claimed theocratic authority. In this respect Calvinism inherited the tradition of the Catholic reforming movement of the Middle Ages, since it maintained the supremacy of the spiritual power as uncompromisingly as St. Gregory VII had done and was equally ready to resist any attempt on the part of the state to interfere in the government of the Church.

Thus in spite of the theological principles that were common to Lutheranism and Calvinism, their social appeal and their political effects were entirely different. Lutheranism had appealed to the princes and had transferred to the state the prerogatives and power and property which had belonged to the Church. Calvinism, on the other hand, appealed to the people, and especially to the newly educated middle classes, to which Calvin himself belonged. In the same way, while in Germany Protestantism soon lost the support of the humanists, so that Luther found his most formidable opponent in Erasmus, the leader of the intelligentsia, in France it was in humanist circles that the success of Calvinism was most pronounced, so that the leaders of Cisalpine humanism in the later 16th century, like J. J. Scaliger and Isaac Casaubon, were found among the Calvinists. In this way the Reformation in its second phase did a good deal to promote the cause of learning. The Calvinists, no less than their enemies, the Jesuits, fully realized the importance of education and wherever they went, even as far as Massachusetts Bay, they brought not only the Bible but also the Latin Grammar.

Nevertheless this humanism was of a strictly utilitarian kind. Its adherents were the friends of education but they were the enemies of

culture and did their best to destroy and dissipate the wealth of religious art and imagery which had been accumulated by centuries of Christian culture. It was this fierce spirit of iconoclasm and the harsh intolerance that the Calvinists showed towards all the manifestations of Catholic piety which made any reconciliation between Protestantism and the movement of Catholic reform impossible and doomed Europe to more than a century of religious war and sectarian controversy.

[TO BE CONTINUED]

## ***Essence***

● Irene G. Dayton

To define a word, a moment—  
A state of being,  
Is to lose the word, the being,

Forever a lost harmony  
In thought. The broken hour of night  
Disintegrates not under marvel of night

But separation from the whole,  
And fulness it might enjoy  
With the multitude of stars.

And the word, an invisible vowel—  
Hangs in the air, unlinked,  
Holding itself aloof

From the tremulous surge  
Of power. The reed rushes of thought  
In the broken hour.

# Perish Poetry

• Emilie Glen

COME to Central Park in row-boat time, in rowboat time, in rowboat time, come to Central Park in rowboat time . . . Jed has me doing it, has me thinking in verse, waking to it, walking to it. Hippo of a boat, but a swan to us among banks of wild cherry and first green, shores away from the Metropolitan Life office and its dragnet bells.

" . . . They are crammed and jammed in busses and—they're each of them alone," Jed reads as I rest on my oars. Anyone who can read like that should be declaiming in a court-room instead of huddling in an insurance office; and as claims adjuster, I'd rather hear, "Buy a bunch of violets for the lady while the sky burns blue above . . . "

Tie loose, hair waving, dark eyes burning in the verse, he looks like a Spanish Don with the leisure for poesy, and he makes me feel *lovely lady*, pale hair in poetic mist about my face, eyes, grey distance. "O world, I cannot hold thee close enough!" Say it, why don't you? Stretch up your arms. This isn't Medina, New York, it's New York, New York, where you can shout a line of verse without creeping window curtains, read poetry in a row-boat; a city windowed to windowlessness, couples making love in high sun, those two characters rowing around in separate boats, vociferating over the motivation of Cordelia in *King Lear*.

The oar slid splash. Reaching for it with my long tennis arm, I didn't so much as tilt him off his verse; rowed on to, "Dissects the common carnival of passions and regrets." The thrust of "Once more the knights to battle go with sword and shield and lance," almost unseated us when I struck a submerged rock, a slosh of oar water wetting his gilt-edged pages. It took the grunting two of us to pole off the reef. I rowed toward a less rocky shore, drifting along in the skip-rope sunlight to, "The cherry trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and sweet perfume, The cherry trees are seas of bloom . . . "

A bit more poetizing by boat got us engaged, but the reading went on for its own sake, graduating from mash verse to odes, elegies, epics, read high on the mica-sparkling rocks of the park, across cafeteria tables, on the sandstone steps of my rooming house as he leaned against the carved dragon whose tail was chipping away.

Jed's gift as a reader was in such need of an audience that he shook out a verse or two at Astrid's cocktail party. Tennyson circled and fell, but T. S. Eliot took talon hold.

The right to T. S. without sneers was part of leaving home porches in Weedsport, Fairview, Akron, hustling past sprinklered lawns and hydrangea bushes toward living our own lives. As upstate fell away from his tones to a more Eliot, "We

are the hollow men, we are the stuffed men," we sat around on the floor with closed eyes as we did in the standing-room alcove at Carnegie Hall, glanced now and then at faces in such abandon that we felt like voyeurs . . . "This is the dead land, This is the cactus land . . ."

Jed rode into a larger cocktail party on the Highwayman's horse . . . "The road was a ribbon of moonlight over the purple moor, And the highwayman came riding—riding—riding . . ."; dismounted at voices that charged across, "Bess, the landlord's daughter . . ."

No one can play to a good house every night; no need to do what Jed did, shove an end of sectional sofa into an alcove, and, a sight to burst my blood vessels, read our Barrel-organ to some fluff, his black-light eyes flashing her at every *Come to Kew*.

Possibly I brought this on by letting my face ease, my sighs thin out, but I was setting no more cocktail stages equipped with stand-ins when I could have him to myself in a rowboat.

Weeks of hot rocks and damp rowboats, and it was getting to be as much work to hearken as to pull on the oars, and embarrassing, like a movie scene in which the heroine must look excruciated while the hero blasts an endless solo at her. Quickarting from grief for Adonais to a lilt with "My heart is like a singing bird," concern over "Gather ye rose-buds while ye may," horror at, "the blood come gargling up from the froth-corrupted lungs," I wearied to divide the dark hunger of those eyes among a covey of new faces nor

could my facial muscles at their most active make up to him for a roomful of respondents.

Les and Myra's apartment had good audience potential, yet even with others to share the work, I had to ready my looks for the flashing of his dark beacons my way. Rather drastic egos were assembled the night we happened in.

Eloise sheered off, "The winter evening settles down with smell of steaks in passageways," to "Stogloff has invited me to join his professional dance group," which started Claire on her bamboo decor, Myra on her screen painting, Jeff on his rare recordings, Gordon on his iron-working week-ends up at Woodstock.

Luckless Jed—all he wants is to waft poesy. If he got stinko in any of those living rooms, puked his guts out, let loose foul language, made passes, pulled fast deals, he'd be acceptable, but just let him send out a few trembling shoots of, "The lark now leaves his watery nest, and climbing shakes his dewy wings . . ." or "Amarantha sweet and fair, Ah, braid no more that shining hair . . ." and glances began spidering, elbows nudged, foot kicked foot.

Regardful in other ways, he's like the polite victim of a growling stomach. Sometimes he breaks off in mid verse to ask, "Shall I go on?" and is met with No's, or led on for a laugh.

Granted, Jed overdid his versifying, but isn't that what we came here for, to overdo things, to roll down a park slope if we like, go without gloves and stockings, to live in former stables, basement bache-

lors, girls living alone on poetic name streets, Barrow, Waverly, Bethune. Our accessories must be odd; our appearance, interesting; ideas, unusual. We're here to be *different*, to meet *different* people. When parents arrive for a visit, we're in quarantine, explaining our wit, translating our phrases. We're intolerant only of intolerance; we scorn commercialism. The more wildly impractical take jobs higher in interest, lower in pay, anything in an art gallery, bookstore, editorial office. You should hear the things we talk about during our lunch hour, and the way we spend our evenings. We take all kinds of courses, go to concerts, lectures, plays. People like us help keep culture alive; we buy the books, visit the non-objective museums; but what about poetry, the reader of poetry?

Poetry may be "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge," but it's coarsening Jed. Turtled against all sensitivity, he runs hostesses after neighbors' anthologies, packs his own pocket editions; reminds the restive of Carlyle's, "We are all poets when we *read* a poem well." Can't crunch so much as a cocktail cracker, jingle ice or ask for a light while he snake-hisses his sibilants, spits out his T's. His fulminations past eleven bring on calls from outraged tenants, and some poor hostess has to close the windows as her mother did before her, offended as her parents at any departure from her norm, her cult of understatement. Drunken brawls, she can cope with, but not poetic shouts in the night.

The Monday Jed kept Les and Myra up past three with the four

acts of *Prometheus Unbound*, they opened their studio couch and got ready for bed, an ignored hint, as he sat on the pillow Myra had puffed, continuing with Act IV, Semichorus I, "An hundred ages we had been kept, cradled in visions of hate and care . . . "

"These people have to work for a living," I reminded him.

"So do we, but let's not be business-like on our own time . . . "

"Come, swift spirits of might and of pleasure, fill the dance and the music of mirth—"

"Are you taking me, or must I get home by myself?" I declaimed across. "Our spoil is won. Our task is done, We are free to dive, or soar, or run . . . ; left, bruised that he considered me so undesirable as to let me go forth, unglamorous as a soup bone in the New York night when I had been *La Belle Dame sans Merci, a red, red rose.*

Next noon he set his tray down beside mine, returning me to cherish-ment with "She walks in beauty, like the night . . . ." Perhaps I wouldn't be such a pushover if it weren't for the remnants of a Shelley dream. Along about junior high I had quite a sherbet affair with Shelley that had to do with lying back in a white meadow looking up at white clouds until even now I can't extricate Shelley from a passing cloud in a blue sky.

"Your readings may work with me," I said, "but they'd best be toned down in a mixed crowd. Poetry is more *a deux* and at times even *seullement*."

All I can say for Jed is that he turned into a periodic reader with

such senseless breakovers as reading around those who didn't come to New York to be different, making a captive audience on busses yet unwired for sound, and he was in danger of reading himself out of his big chance. If he can impress Beulah's dad as a likely legal mind, he may be taken into his four-name law firm. With Mr. Barlow dull as snores, Jed would sit on his hands rather than reach for a pocket edition. The only excess *Barlow, Withers, Random, and Dawes* understands is a chess marathon and golfing to blisters.

The night Mr. Barlow opened the minipiano and to chop-chop accompaniment bellowed, *Oh-h-h dat watahmelon* from college glee days, my brows were too vague to sharp much of a warning against counter attack. "What about setting this to music?" Jed asked, roaring into, "Go fetch to me a pint o' wine, An' fill it in a silver tassie, That I may drink before I go, A service to my bonnie lassie . . ." Mr. Dawes roared back with a drinking song of his own vintage, Jed declaiming louder, "The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith, Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry . . ." his chances for the firm of *Barlow, Withers, Random and Dawes*, bellowed away in one great belch of verse.

Jed's desk at the office won't be his much longer if he keeps hanging around the water cooler with a book of verse in his hand, and declaims in the men's room loud enough to be heard in the ladies'.

About his coming in late and taking days off. He's discovered that he's a great guy in a bar-room

with his book of verse, but he tangles with the type who rage against jukebox repeats. One brawl sent him bleeding to an emergency clinic, and kept him out of the office for nearly a week. A possible daytime audience could keep him out, too, some housewife who liked to be uplifted at her chores, hear her yearnings versified. Husbands who could cope with passes found this insidious, unbeatable. If husbands but new, they had only to wait; she'd be back to a radio you can turn on and off.

Our love scanned only when I went along with his verse, which couldn't be done at the office. Shunned like a commie, he broke in a new file clerk, her hair a dry flame, eyes long enough to appear entranced as he read to her behind the files, at crowded lunch counters, by the fountain in Madison Square park, and perhaps in our rowboat, but only because she was too dumb to remove the body, this inheritor of the classics.

Fired with his redhead, he wouldn't stir within rattler range of a job when he could go from apartment to apartment, and bar to bar, reading out his welcome.

Broke it off tonight. The ring, designed for us by a village dadaist, he transferred to my friendship finger. Oh, it's not the redhead; she was gone with his severance pay. Married life with Jed would close living rooms to us, lose us old friends, keep us from new ones. Home poetry would have me doing everything to meter from chewing to brushing my teeth.

Jed isn't letting me go with a sigh and a verse, belonging as I do to

his days of poetic innocence before he knew life in reaction to his art. Thursday night, he was leaning against the chip-tailed dragon when I came back from a French movie at The Art. In verse he told me he was through with verse, quoted a stanza from which I was supposed to extract that he had a job lined up and loved me more than his readings.

As sole member of *Poetics Anonymous* he found it rough going. Before starting out with him I had to frisk his pockets for stray volumes, had to break him of reading to me, alone, or even quoting. An occasional setback was to be expected like the time a thoughtless hostess played a Dylan Thomas recording in which Dylan couldn't come close to doing Jed's justice to Dylan.

Ignoring this one lapse, I talked up his legal brain to Beulah's dad again. Jed suffered long sessions of abstinence in which he let Mr. Dawes sing uncontested through *little dogs wagging their tails, pea green boats, and this is what she ate*, which culminated, one Dawes deafening night, in a date to meet the partners at ten o'clock next morning. We'd be stretching the hammock right here in Manhattan, and we'd differ only to the extent our friends differed. Our furnishings would be unusual, our accessories odd. We'd abandon ourselves to stadium concerts, attend the Museum of Non-Objective Art, and occasionally take in paid poetry readings, such as *Murder in the Cathedral* or *Don Juan in Hell*.

Jed promised to meet me in Madison Square Park on my lunch hour,

the day of the interview to let me know how he made out. I stood by the dry December fountain in the cold damp, wishing it would give out with a drink of strong coffee; walked round and round the winter stone, round and round to get my blood up, the Metropolitan Life bells dropping leaden hoops off my lunch hour . . . "round the prickly pear, Prickly pear prickly pear . . . "

No phone call from Jed explained away that lunch-hour runaround. It was Beulah who told me that he never kept the appointment with her dad. The ring he had changed over to my engagement finger for a silvered second time, I shut away in its non-objective box.

A man who takes you to Kew in lilac time doesn't return you in a hurry. Round and round the dating tree couldn't cloud over his eyes burning in a verse. Once I stealthed down a side street near his place, looking for the glow on the bricks that meant his light was on. Not seeing it, I rushed back in the half hope that he'd be leaning against the dragon tail; wanted him so much I'd even listen to a double epic.

Saturday afternoons, I'd walk along our lake in Central Park, ducks idling along the green dark water; climb to our mica sparkling rock, hearing, "The Cherry-trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and sweet perfume, The cherry-trees are seas of bloom . . . "

A February afternoon that smelled of spring ahead in air that could be blowing off melting snow fields, I was coming down from our rock near the almost empty benches by

the lake when I saw him—saw Jed. His hair, march wild, tie loose, suit looking slept in, he was reading at an unshaven man whose ragged trousers hung by a safety pin. Picking at his ear, the man took to what heels he had.

Jed went on reading, gesturing like a baton-less conductor, burning his eyes into the pigeons who pecked as if the lines were fast-dropping kernels.

Run to him; listen; let him speak with the tongues of many poets, this poet without verse of his own. As

I slipped onto the bench beside him, he went on reading as if I'd never been away, "Stars in the purple dusk above the rooftops, Pale saffron mist and seem to die, And I myself on a swiftly tilting planet, Stand before a glass and tie my tie . . . "

"Look, you're no Max Boden-heim," my words came out, "to wander around down at heel. You're no poet, only a reader of poetry, which is no life's work."

Nag ends of words brushing him like lake weeds, Jed walked off down the path, declaiming to the air.

## ***The Face on the Cutting Room Floor***

• Stephen Morris

This girl with the Gulf of Mexico in her eyes  
 Is too good for one lousy four-minute scene  
 And lingers in the mind.  
 Her mouth aches too much.  
 The tousled, charcoal hair  
 And that pinched chin  
 Bother me too.  
 There's something crazy and intense  
 Back of her face.  
 She must need the job.  
 She's so good she's all that they'll remember.  
 So what happens?  
 The movie gets pulled out of focus.  
 No. She's out.  
 Nobody knows her anyhow.  
 It's not as if she has a friend somewhere.  
 Kill that scene and retake it.  
 Get Central Casting on the phone. Now.  
 We want a bit player, tell them that.  
 Just a bit player, honey and molasses.  
 And hurry up.

What's the matter with this splicer?

## **Eve**

● **Brother D. Adelbert, F.S.C.**

Spring sprang flush  
On leaf and branch  
When Eve at dawn  
Walked soft through the grass.

She saw the buds  
Of apples burst  
In laughter of foam,  
Burgeon pink as she passed.

Summer shone first  
On beast and bird,  
On Eve at noon  
Sleeping soft in the grass,

On apple-boughs  
With Golden Fruit—  
While the Serpent sunned,  
Coiled on the path.

Autumn chilled  
The evening calm,  
Greying the Orchard's  
Golden gloss.

Eve heard only  
A whisper—slowly  
Her branching fingers  
The Fruit enclosed.

Winter roughly  
Gripped the country,  
Prisoned the Orchard  
In darkness and frost.

Eve lay down  
Beneath a stone—  
Her children mourn,  
Weeping their loss.

# Pound of Cure

• Jack McDevitt

[The editors of FOUR QUARTERS are pleased to present herewith the first prize winner in La Salle College's Fifth Annual Freshman Short Story Contest.]

There are Forces in this world of which Man knows little. And, sometimes, when Man falls victim to his own folly, these Forces may act in his behalf.—  
Lord Secane

**N**O ONE KNEW how the sphere had gotten on the White House lawn. At the time nobody cared! From the moment a sleepy chambermaid leaned her head through a second story window and saw the glistening globe resting serenely on the cool, green grass until the President and his family had been evacuated was a matter of minutes.

Then the Bomb Squad moved in. Khaki-uniformed men surrounded the bomb, as if to sneak up on it. The thing was highly polished, and looked like a little sun, dazzling the eyes of the experts who, no doubt, were completely in control of the situation. About three feet in diameter, the sphere appeared to be without marking of any kind, with not even the hint of a door.

"Hello, Flannery. Looking for a story?"

"Hi, Lieutenant. How've you been? What's that thing out there?"

I pointed to the bomb and the uniform looked unhappy. He was Lieutenant Bauers. THE Lieutenant Bauers, whose heroism had saved the President from assassination less than a month ago, and earned him

his commission. You will probably remember reading about the incident. It received plenty of publicity at the time.

"Can't tell yet. What would you say?"

"Interested?"

"Sure."

"I think it's a spaceship, with tiny men from Mars, armed with stun guns, or sun guns, or something. And probably allied with the Russians."

It was the looie's turn to grin.

"Oh?"

I saw I wouldn't get anything this way, so I smiled politely and walked a few steps nearer the bomb, thinking what good listeners army men are.

A crowd had gathered. A crowd that couldn't quite believe it was a bomb sitting on the White House lawn. Who ever heard of such a thing? The cops trying to keep the people back seemed more frightened than the people themselves. Everybody just stood around, waiting for something to happen.

The Bomb Squad was still busy sneaking up on the globe. As far as I could see, nobody touched it. There was no ticking such as one

customarily comes to expect from bombs. Close up, it looked like a balloon.

We stood there and looked at it. We were still looking at it when it shot a fine white mist into the air.

Somebody shouted "Poison Gas!" A lady in the crowd fainted. The mob looked on expectantly.

The mist hung over the sphere like a little white cloud, and then a gust of wind caught it, whirled it round and round, and sent it spinning over the lawn and out across Pennsylvania Avenue.

The crowd oooohed and aaaahed, and settled back to see what else would happen. Nothing did, but they probably would have hung on through the rest of the day anyway had it not been Christmas Eve. Crowds are like that.

I got a by-line for my story and a headline that made a joke of the whole affair. It was pretty funny.

### PRESIDENT GETS EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT: A BOMB! Man in Red Suit Makes Rounds Early in Capital

Since the war had been on for three years, the implication between the Man in the Red Suit and the Russians was obvious. So much so that Moscow vehemently denied any knowledge of the affair, and stated flatly that any attempt by the Soviet Government to assassinate the President would be carried on in a much more efficient manner. They also sympathized with the downtrodden American Public who had to put up with such a bungling government.

Doris and I had a wonderful Christmas despite the freak fog that moved in and stayed for the weekend. We were busy storing up gifts for the boy, who was due to arrive any day now. Doris said, no, it wouldn't be a boy, but I knew all along it would be. I just didn't carry my multiplication far enough.

The sphere was back in the news Wednesday. It had been moved to CCNY at the request of Dr. James Wolsey. Wolsey had a string of letters a mile long after his name so when he said something everybody listened, even the Government.

There had been, up to that time, no determined attempt to dissect the globe. Wolsey decided that the best way to get to the bottom of the situation was to drill through the resistant outer shell. When he broke through, the thing exploded. Or, rather, imploded. The sphere collapsed and poured a white mist into the air that forced the eminent Wolsey to beat a hasty retreat from his lab. Dr. Wolsey was somewhat taken aback by the affair, the papers reported, but lost no time in advancing several clever theories as to how metal can collapse like chewing gum. I assume the theories were clever although, I must confess, after two years of chemistry at Tennessee, they went completely over my head.

New Year's Day, 1960, was ushered in with reports of increased fighting in France, the imminent danger of a Russian invasion in Alaska, the tremendous toll of automobile accidents in 1959 (although the exact figures were not yet compiled), and an unusually heavy fog over New York City.

There were the customary cartoons depicting a diapered baby taking over a beaten and bruised old world from an equally beaten and bruised old man. And the timeless caption:

"It's not as bad as all that, Sir; I'll pull us out."

Yeah.

The war had been started by a hassle over territorial rights between two countries nobody ever heard of. Russia moved in to settle the dispute, and did so by claiming the land in question for herself, plus a sizable chunk that hadn't been involved.

The two little kingdoms joined forces and declared war. England was drawn in days later by the infamous Cameron Affair, in which one of her ships, docked in one of the little countries, was confiscated, and her crew butchered. The Reds had just walked right in.

That was November 12, '56. On the fourteenth the U.N. declared war on the Soviet Union. Several member countries promptly announced their resignation from the world organization, claiming neutrality. The rabbits were starting to scatter.

The war gradually developed into a give-and-take affair. One day we were winning a glorious victory, and the next we were running for our lives in some God-forsaken hellhole. Both sides were sitting back with devastating atomic stockpiles, but nobody wanted to be first to use them. But it was a recognized fact that it had to come. When one side or the other faced defeat, it would haul out the A-bombs, and the H-bombs, and then it would be everybody for himself.

The worst sufferer had been Great Britain. Apparently the English had not yet learned their lesson from the Nazis. They had been bombed so heavily for three years that even they were beginning to wonder if there'll always be an England.

On Tuesday the Russians came through with the anticipated Alaskan invasion, driver's licenses were temporarily suspended in New York due to heavy fog which still cloaked the city, and I became the father of twins.

Doris said she'd never forget the look on my face when they told me we'd gotten a two-for-the-price-of-one deal. And both boys, too. Hell, what more can a father ask for? We named them Billy and Bobby, after Doris' father and brother. My name's Matt, but she promised the next one for me. That's nice.

By Friday we'd pushed the Russians back into the ocean. New York announced a heavy increase in automobile fatalities because of the attempts of drivers to run the now-famous New York Goo. Police cars took to the streets, but succeeded only in colliding with one another and running down pedestrians they couldn't even see.

Abruptly, New York screamed for help! Industry had slowed to an agonizing crawl, armed bands of marauders embarked on a crime wave unparalleled in American history. And there was still no relief in sight.

Two months after the fog had first appeared, the National Guard went in. The next day, the Governor issued a statement that the city would have to be evacuated until

the atmospheric disturbance could be corrected.

That got a big laugh. Every comedian in Hollywood embarked on a project to correct the New York Goo.

Doris enjoyed reading the theories the big magazines were coming up with. It was a situation similar to the Flying Saucers of a decade ago. The whole thing developed into a rat race to see who could dream up the most fantastic explanation for the phenomenon. And so the stories got wilder and wilder. It was no longer freak weather, but rather a Russian plot, or the first effects of a melting polar cap, or the beginning of a Martian invasion. One writer exposed the Goo as a publicity stunt and demanded immediate action against the inferred parties. The usual crack-of-doom prophets were climbing up on soapboxes and preaching repentance. Funny nobody ever linked it up with the globe . . . but then there never was a connection established.

The laughing stopped when two troop ships collided off the Jersey coast and went down with all hands. That was tough. It got tougher when the best explanation the War Department could come up with was that it was extremely foggy. It wouldn't have been so bad had the accident not taken place in the middle of the afternoon.

We staggered into April. The war went on with increased fury. England, reeling under daily savage bombing attacks, was ready to quit. Soviet armies continued to overrun France, the last stronghold of democracy on the continent. Yet, the

United States and her surprisingly strong South American allies continued to carry the war to the Russians.

The New York Goo began to spread. It swirled down into Pennsylvania, raced up into New England, sifted across the border into Canada. The cloud expanded with increased momentum. People began to get scared. They saw their cities and towns enveloped in a heavy white mist that stopped their vision at two feet. Their food supply was virtually cut off. And always, in the wake of the Goo, came the looters.

A fantastic story reached the *Herald* wires from Philadelphia. Blind men had organized and were plundering the stricken city. Blind men, used to a world of darkness, had suddenly emerged as the luckiest people in northeastern United States.

Rumors began to spread about what the Goo does to people. There were all kinds of stories, so unbelievably wild that people began to believe them.

Humanity gathered itself up and, in one gigantic surge, ran for the West Coast. By train, by automobile, on foot, the proud American people took to the clogged highways. And the Goo followed, pushing men before it like cattle.

Rioting broke out. The Government declared martial law.

On April 14, the President went on the air on a nation-wide hookup. He reminded the American Public of their heritage, and asked them to be calm. Stay home, he repeated again and again, you're safer there.

All the resources of the United States which could be spared from the conflict were being brought to bear on the problem, and a quick solution was promised.

The Chief Executive followed up his reassuring words by placing the blame for the whole thing squarely on Russian shoulders. He assured a swift and deadly retaliation, which sounded like the H-bomb. He went through the usual ritual of stirring up more antagonism against the Soviets, and finished with a grand flourish of words that said nothing at all.

Enlistment in the service after that became so heavy that a bill was introduced to do away with the draft. Credit for the sudden rise of nationalism was given to the President for his stirring address, but the truth was simply that people wanted to get away from the Goo. And any port in a storm.

A week later, the Government packed its bags and headed south. We knew then what was coming.

Doris stored in plenty of non-perishables, just in case . . .

I was surprised at the more or less unconcerned attitude of our neighbors. But what was there to be disturbed about? A little fog never hurt anybody. It might be an interesting experience. For all the wars, these are monotonous times. The Goo will do us all good.

But they hadn't read the stories that came into the *Herald* office. People starving in the streets of New York, hospitals left unattended, men driven insane by the Goo, and roaming the streets of our greatest cities,

side by side with bands of thieves and cutthroats.

I was never sure whether it was the 27th or the 28th that it finally came. I had gone to bed one night listening to the pitter-patter of soft spring rain on our shingled roof. The occasional muffled boom of a distant thunderclap sounded through the open window. It was the kind of a storm that looks like it has been sent to wash the evil from the world.

Ever notice how you awake from a heavy sleep? All of a sudden you feel awareness. Your eyes may be closed, but your other senses function perfectly. There is no gradual passing from one state to another.

That was what it was like. I lay there for a long moment, enjoying the feel of the light coverlet that snuggled against my body. On the bureau the old alarm clock ticked away as it had been doing for ten years. I drew the spread tightly about me. Then I opened my eyes.

What would be your reaction to awake and find your bedroom full of smoke? Would you jump up and run and scream and gather your family and run outside where you would be safe? But what would you do if conditions were no better outside your distraught home?

I knew before I struggled through the mist to the window what awaited me. The Goo was a physical force and a mental force. You wanted to take yourself, mind and body, and hide from it. It was a queer and totally unexpected sensation.

There was a vague shadow in the stuff, about three feet away and slightly below the window. The

poplar. I wondered how it felt about the situation. Maybe it wanted help.

Help. I shook my head at that one.

Funny how nothing exists outside the little world we build up for ourselves. Wars, depressions, epidemics, none of them are really there unless we, personally, are hit by them. For the first time, the Goo really existed.

Something whispered, "Run! Run!" and I forced myself to laugh. The most primitive emotion: Fear. The child locked in the dark closet. But my mind could not grasp the idea of an all-enveloping fog and told me not to worry, it'll all be gone tomorrow. I wondered how Doris and the kids would take it, and how Tom Hesler down the street would feel. He hadn't been interested yesterday. Called me an alarmist.

I must have stood there a long time before I felt the arm around my waist. I looked down at her deep, brown eyes and grinned.

"Look what's blew into town, Honey."

She looked and smiled at my poor attempt at humor.

"I better see how the twins are."

The *Herald* kept a skeleton staff on to keep the paper's radio station on the air. Actually we were broadcasting over a TV circuit, but without the picture.

It was obviously impossible to put out a printed edition. We couldn't even get newsprint, let alone make deliveries. We went on every hour on the hour for fifteen minutes with news, and played records for the remaining time. Occasionally we piped through outside

telecasts, but there didn't seem much sense to that. What could you do? People couldn't even watch TV sets in their own homes without absorbing a quick case of eyestrain.

On May 3 we lost contact with New York.

On May 4 *Pravda* issued a statement to the effect that all aircraft in western Norway were grounded due to intense fog in that area.

On the 6th England got her first respite from daily bombings since she had entered the war.

Fighting in France and the Far East was grinding to a halt. Both sides claimed poor visibility. All American naval vessels were recalled with the intention of docking indefinitely.

On May 9 somebody wrecked the station. Harry Lloyd and Paul Bridges were there when it happened. Lloyd was killed, beaten to death with a blunt instrument, and Bridges was gone, presumably having run and kept on going.

After that I stayed home with Doris and the twins. We lived comfortably off the stores we had. Occasionally there were visitors, but they grew fewer and fewer. We received many invitations to leave, but where was there to go?

We began to get used to the Goo. You couldn't taste it, smell it, feel it. You could close your eyes and it wasn't hard to pretend that it wasn't there.

Strangely, those few weeks were probably the happiest of my life. For the first time, I really got to know my wife, know her as a man should know the woman he mar-

ried. Sounds ridiculous, but that was the way it struck me at the time.

We did nothing but talk, and care for the boys, and play like two kids. We invented games, like pitching pennies into a fog-shrouded corner of the living room. And we waited for something to happen.

It did. About a month after the station's close we were sitting comfortably on our big sofa, wondering what the rest of the world was doing, and estimating how long our food supply would last before we'd need more.

The scent of cool, green grass drifted in through an open window, smelling like it does after a thunder-shower. And with it came a tapping sound, a tapping of canes on the cement walk outside.

Visitors! The first in what seemed like a long time. I jumped to my feet and ran to the door. My fingers gripped the knob but froze at the booming words that burst from the man outside.

"Okay, open up in there! This is the Police!"

Somebody laughed, a deep grisly thing that touched on brutality. Then they began to bang.

The stories from New York and Philadelphia burst into my mind; I saw Harry Lloyd and the way he looked when they found him that morning; I saw Doris and the twins.

I slid the bolt shut, then hurriedly locked the windows on the side of the house. I got the ladder from the closet; then, pushing Doris ahead of me, I made for the boys' room.

The shouting grew louder, as did the hammering on the door. Doris gathered my boys into her arms and

led the way to the front room. Downstairs, the sound of a shattering window was accompanied by a cry of triumph.

I set the ladder under the door to the attic. Doris went up first, then I handed the twins to her, and followed, drawing the ladder up after me and replacing the door as quietly as I could.

Voices drifted up from our living room. Laughing voices. Cursing voices. Something heavy crashed to the floor and a shout went up!

Then the voices began to spread out. They disappeared into the basement, rose up the stairs. Occasionally there was a shout of glee, probably indicating that a discovery had been made. And each voice was companion to a cane. A cane that was sounding a tap-tap-tap that was destroying everything we called home.

They are present in every civilization. The vermin. The things that look like men, act like men, but are not men. The cowards who walk by night and numbers. They live next door to you, or work with you. They're the cashier in the supermarket, or the milkman. Or the guy you golf with every Sunday. They're decent people . . . until you take away the threat of retribution!

Doris sobbed softly into my shoulder.

"Don't let them find the food; please, Lord, don't let them find the food."

They did. We stood there for long minutes running numbed fingers along empty shelves. There were no words spoken. There was only one thing we could do now.

Upstairs one of the twins started to cry.

Fortunately, my chevvie hadn't been touched. I knew of a TV relay station not too far away which we might be able to turn into a workable farm. So, next morning, we piled into the old boat and started north on 14th Street. I was careful to put Doris and the boys in the back out of harm's way.

I flipped on the low beams, and kept at slightly less than fifteen. We slid past a huge shadow rising high into the Goo. The Washington Monument. I didn't like the thought that ran through my mind when I saw it. We turned west on Constitution Avenue.

We hadn't gotten far when something brushed against the front fender. A high-pitched scream rose like a siren, climbing higher and higher, as if the individual were in terrible pain. Then the sound vanished, and a brick crashed through the rear window. There was a thud against my door. I instinctively hit the gas, and the car bolted forward.

Doris shouted, then we jumped up onto the curb and piled into a wall. White lights danced in my head, turning to green, and yellow. They spun and whirled, and became little shining spheres that trailed white mist behind them as they performed their grotesque ritual. They whirled faster and faster, until they blended into a circle of white light. White light that dissolved into fog.

Then I was floating in the Goo. And somewhere in the cloud there was a tap-tap-tap. I felt myself beginning to fall, to slip over some precipice I could not see. There was

an insane urge to scream, but nothing came from my frozen vocal chords. And the tap-tap-tap grew louder.

The steering wheel was still firmly clenched in sweaty, trembling hands. I put an arm to my face and pulled it away crimson. Behind me Doris was singing!

My feet brushed something on the floor, a something that was white and yielding to the touch. I lifted my son into my arms, and rage replaced the fear in my heart.

They were coming after us. Canes tapping along the street, and coming from both directions. I wanted so desperately to take those damn canes, and break them, shatter them into splinters, then do the same with their owners. To kill them . . . beat them down . . . kick them . . . choke them . . . fight till the last man was a broken bloody mess . . . kick . . . fight . . . kill . . .

My brain teetered on the edge of sanity. I fought for control. I fought with a violence that, in its passing, left me weak and exhausted.

I staggered from the wreck, then pulled the back door open.

"C'mon, Doris. We've got to go."

She didn't even look at me, but continued to purr softly over little Bobby, the one she had named for her brother. The words were indistinguishable, but the tune was a familiar one.

She looked up when she felt my hand on her arm. She smiled and turned her attention again to Bobby. She cooed something in his ear and he gurgled.

I tugged at her arm and finally

had to pull her from the car. I reached through the fog until I felt a brick wall sliding beneath my fingers. Then a door with a small window at the top. The knob turned freely, but wouldn't catch. It spun in my hand like a top. Panic tugged at my brain. I banged desperately on the door.

A face appeared at the window. It stared at us, a hostile, misshapen oval set in a bulging skull. I pointed down the street. He must have seen the fear in my eyes. He didn't blink. I pushed at the door, and plainly set the word "Please" on my lips.

A trace of a smile twisted the corners of the thin lips, and the face vanished as suddenly as it appeared.

Frantically, we stumbled along the wall. Then I felt glass! A big display window!

I set Billy's little body carefully on the ground, then threw myself through the pane. It exploded in my face, and I crashed to the floor, rolling and sliding until a heavily panelled counter checked my forward motion. Glass splattered over the room like rain.

I climbed to my feet and started back for Doris, but she had followed quickly behind me, with the twins

in her arms and the light of reason in her eyes.

It was the work of a moment to get through the back door and escape the horde. Then we came here.

That was five years ago. Doris says the Goo is thinning out. But I doubt it.

The relay station makes a good farm. Oddly enough, the mist doesn't seem to interfere with the crops. Oh, they're a little under-nourished, but who are we to complain?

The equipment at the station was wrecked when we found it. But, in my spare time, I constructed a radio. Pretty strong little gadget, too. We broadcast twice a day, but as yet we've received no answer. Once we thought we had something, but it died away before we could establish contact.

We're happy here. The plumbing works to the extent that we have hot and cold running water. We've built defenses against any marauders who might decide to wander in, but I'm convinced we've seen the last of any outsiders for a long time to come.

Bobby doesn't like it too much up here. But he has a good time playing with his sister Janet.

## **To the Beauty of the Virgin Mary**

(Translation from Leo XIII)

• Brother G. Jude, F.S.C.

'Tis sweet melody for the ear, to say: "O Mother, hail":  
A sweet melody to say, "O kindly Mother, hail!"

Thou art for me my joy, good hope, and chaste love:  
In times tempestuous—thou my refuge be.

If smitten with distracting cares, my poor soul,  
Uneasy, feels the weight of grief and sadness;

If thy son thou wilt have seen in trouble ever pressed,  
Him to thy maternal bosom, O kind Virgin, take.

But lo! with rapid tread approaches now that final day.  
Warding off the demon to the Stygian depths below,

Be thou present, O dear Mother: in my faltering age  
Gently thou, with thine own hand, my weary eyes protect,

And my refuge soul O kindly bring  
Straight back to its own dear God.

## **Contributors**

EMINENT British sociologist-historian, CHRISTOPHER DAWSON, is familiar to *four quarters* readers. CHARLES EDWARD EATON, formerly with the U.S. Embassy in Brazil, has been honored by the Poetry Society of America and by Martha Foley in several of her annual collections of *Best American Short Stories*. EMILIE GLEN has had stories in *American Mercury*, *Perspective*, *Epoch*, etc., and has also been represented in Martha Foley's collections. JACK McDEVITT is a student at La Salle. Of the poets, STEPHEN MORRIS has frequently contributed to *four quarters*, while IRENE G. DAYTON appears for the first time; BR. ADELBERT and BR. JUDE are members of La Salle's faculty, in the English and Classics departments respectively. BR. EULOGIUS FIDELIS, who created the scratch board print on the inside cover, teaches in La Salle High School.

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